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which would alleviate the fever. As the child's strength declined, the silent grief of the mother was a sore thing to see. I tried hard to persuade her to take him to the doctor in Kuwait, but in vain. One morning according to my custom I came to visit the sick child. As I approached Sarah's tent, Sarah came out to greet me dressed in her best festive garments. Smiling and dry-eyed, she invited me as usual into her portion of the tent. Her father was away. I sat down, suspecting something, I knew not what, but I said nothing. Sarah made coffee and brought it to me to drink. She even joked and told an amusing story. Presently I said "Where is little 'Abdullah? How is he?" Poor Sarah with a great effort choked down a sob and pointed to a small heap of earth not twenty yards from the tent. "There he lies," said she, "half an hour ago I laid him to rest; God gave him to me, and God has taken him, thanks be to God."

Just then Sarah's father came up, and when I expressed my sorrow and sympathy to him, he laughed loud and gruffly and said, *Al hamd ul'Illah* (the praise be to God). "He will give us another, and perhaps many more. We 'Ajman are fighting men, and God in his mercy does as he pleases, we must always laugh at death, whether it comes by sickness, or by bullet." The whole picture left an indelible mark on my mind and it will be long before I forget the dry-eyed sorrowing Sarah.

The poor girl lost her husband a year later—he divorced her because he couldn't return from Iraq. Little Sarah eventually went to Najd and Riyadh, and there married one of Bin Sa'ud's principal *fiddwis* or guards. She wrote and told me a year after, that she had got another little boy. My diary records also that in October 1933 she presented her husband with a little girl. In 1936 I heard through her father that smallpox had carried off one of the children. Poor Sarah.*

PRAYER

The Badawin is very punctilious about his prayers. Whether in camp or on the march, he solemnly prays five times a day according

* Sarah came up to Kuwait from Riyadh in February 1938, and once again we saw our old friend. She came with her father and showed us her new baby boy. She said she had a girl of four also, whom she had left in her aunt in the desert.

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Mourning

When a man dies, the widow has to seclude herself from all for a period of four months and ten days. Well-to-do families confine the wife to the house for this period while Badawin women hide themselves as much as practicable in their tents. The townswoman of Kuwait actually shuts herself in a room, devoid of comforts such as carpets, etc., and can only be attended by another woman who brings her food and water. She must not see a man, or male relative, or hear a male voice.

Among the lower classes the belief about this *'ada* or custom of shutting the widow up is, that as soon as a man dies and goes to the other world, he is chained by an iron chain round his neck. This chain can only be removed by his widow's observing a proper course of mourning, for four months and ten days.

The very poor classes in Kuwait do not pay much attention to the above rule, and forty days' seclusion generally meets the case with them.

Graveyards are always looked upon as places of ill-omen and must be avoided, especially at night, as *jinns* or spirits are believed to be moving about them.

The great western graveyard at Kuwait, where the shaikhs bury their dead, is especially notorious for *jinns*, and many an eerie tale is told of people who have dared to go too near the place and have been pursued and [illegible] by these evil spirits.

It is part[illegible] to put your foot on a grave, and to do so after dark o[illegible] on so-called "madness". When young Mutlug ibn Majid al [illegible]a of the Mutair at Jariya went mad for the love of a lady (see page 149) many said, and he himself is supposed to have believed, that he had accidentally set foot on a Badawin grave when he went out of his tent after dark to attend to nature.

Among the Badawin the person dying usually passes away peaceably in grave and dignified manner; this especially applies to the old. I was present at the death of one of Shaikh Hillal bin Faja'an al Mutairi's Badawin relatives, a poor man of over eighty. I was camped at Araifjan among my Badawin friends Salim al Murraiyin's family, and the old man's tent was close by. Salim was away in Najd when the old man suddenly collapsed and gave out that his time had come. There were only women and children about and the Dhafiri camel

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Death-Bed Scenes

herdsmen. These and me the old man called around him, and after making the women prop him up in a sitting posture, he began to bid each person farewell in simple and quiet manner. He then addressed himself to me and asked me to give his salaams to Salim, Hillal al Mutairi, Shaikh Ahmad, Shaikh 'Abdullah al Salim, and others whom I did not know; he also sent messages to my wife and to my son Sa'ud. He then asked for a cup of coffee. After drinking it he lay down, closed his eyes and just ceased to breathe. His farewells, *balagh salami 'ala Hillal, wa 'ala Ahmad al Jabir*, etc., were simple and fine.

After his death Shaikh 'Abdullah al Salim, who was camped a mile off, sent his servants to wash and bury the old man. This was considered a good and generous act, for of course the women could not do this.

I was not a little moved by this simple death-bed scene of the desert, which reminded me of the Old Testament. No doubt Abraham died thus, sending messages to all and sundry up to the very last.

In Kuwait and in other Muslim towns, when a corpse is being carried to the cemetery for burial, any person lending a hand and assisting in shouldering the bier, a sort of open stretcher affair,

BIER

derives great merit. So at a funeral procession it is usual to see men changing places rapidly and often, each anxious to shoulder the bier for a short time.

Townswomen go off the deep end in truly alarming style when a relative dies. They tear their hair, beat their heads and breasts and rend their garments in a manner which is quite incomprehensible to us. This is partly due to the more emotional nature of the Arab woman, and partly because it is considered the right thing to do.

I have seen some women fall down and have to be carried away apparently bereft of all sense and reason, so grief-stricken have they been. When her brother-in-law was killed in a well whose sides fell in and crushed him (September 1933) our servant-girl Hamda even tore out her gold earrings and broke her gold bracelets and flung

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ready and the body is let dov . to the bottom by men. If the dead person is a woman a sheet is held round the grave so that men's eyes do not see her, and a woman, or man neighbour if she has no sons or brother, goes down into the grave itself to prepare the dead person for her last resting place. This woman removes the covering from ears and breast, turns the corpse on to her side, face towards Mecca, and places her right hand under her right cheek. The body now rests in the hollowed-out nook facing the open grave.

This operation done, the cavity (*al lahad*) containing the corpse is closed by mud, bricks, stones and mud (not by *'arfaj* as among the Badawin) so that earth will not enter therein. Lastly, the gr e is filled in and everyone goes home.

An important point to realise is that a husband must not under any circumstances see his wife's face after death. This is considered a grievous sin in the same way as if she had been divorced from him. Hence the uncovering of the dead woman's face must be done by another woman, or by her brother or son. Should a very poor man or woman die without relatives then it is incumbent on the next-door neighbour (*jār*) to arrange the washing and burial. This I understand is laid down in the Qur'an. Nothing is done by way of combing or plaiting the hair, but the person washing the body must go through the ceremony of *tulpis* while doing so, that is, she or he must sing the praises of the dead person, the good works he or she did in this life, how he or she fasted and prayed, and call on God to give the dead peace in everlasting heaven. It is commonly believed that a person who has lived a good life, has not spoken evil of his neighbours, and has been generous with this world's goods, will after death remain soft and pliant as if still alive up to the hour of burial. If the opposite has been the case, the body, arms and feet will become immediately stiff. Hence, when it is found easy to bend the right arm and place the right hand under the right cheek of the dead person, all men know that the deceased has lived a good and virtuous life; if the operation is done with difficulty then that person is known to have been a non-virtuous person, and God will know how to reward him or her hereafter.

The sight of a dead person has not the frightening effect on Arab children that it may have on their Western brothers and sisters.

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Familiarity with Death

Chap. XIV

Children regularly see the faces of dead persons in Arabia, and before they are many years old they become quite callous in this respect. This way may be the best after all. It certainly makes for easy dying when the final call comes to man and woman, and it is rare to find an Arab man or woman showing fear of the future as the end draws near.

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Muntafiq

Tribe Etymologies

Chap. XLIV

A GOOD WATCH-DOG

To make a Badawin dog fierce and a good watch-dog, his ears are 231
cut off when young. A piece is then cooked and given him to eat. This, according to the Arab, turns him into a good watch-dog and especially a good tracker by night. (See Chapter IV.)

THE NUMBER ELEVEN

A curious thing about the 'Awamir tribe is that they never will use 801
the word *ahada 'ashar* for eleven. They always say *'ashra wa wahad* (ten and one). The rest of the numerals they name as other Arabs do. I have not yet been able to find out the reason for this avoidance of eleven.

Kuwait, October 30, 1933.

HOW AN 'AJMAN WOMAN SAVES HER CHILDREN

Among the 'Ajman, if a woman's children are dying apparently 761
without reason, a piece of the ear above the lobe is cut off from the latest born infant, placed inside a date, and given to the mother to eat. The child is then known as *Al Jida'* (the cut-off one).

Muteira bint 'Iyda al Fa'aran al Hithlain, wife of Hamad al Mishwat, had had this done. She showed me her ear on 16th August, 1935.

ORIGIN OF THE NAME DHAFIR, THE GREAT DESERT TRIBE SOUTH OF THE EUPHRATES

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The name means a "collection of many oddments", and is derived from the same root as:

Tadhafaw—they were plaited together.
Dhafar—to plait.
Dhafeyir—a woman's plait.

Similarly we have Muntafiq from *intifaq*, a coming together.

NOTE.—This describes exactly how these two great tribes were originally formed. They grew out of a collection or confederation of a number of small desert units in the first instance, and of a number of marsh tribes in the second, under Sa'adun leaders.